





**WEBCOMIC
UNIVERSE.COM**

WESTERN BRANDS

R

ROCKING C

S

CIRCLE BARS

7

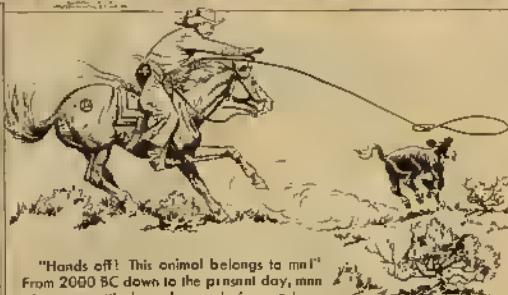
SEVEN V S

Y

WINE GLASS

A

FLYING A



"Hands off! This animal belongs to me!"
From 2000 BC down to the present day, men
who own cattle have been placing marks—
cattle brands—on the hides of their animals to show ownership.

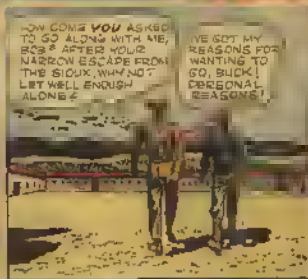
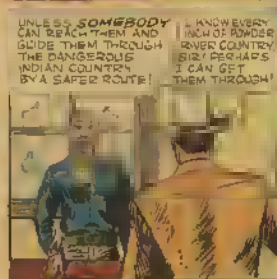
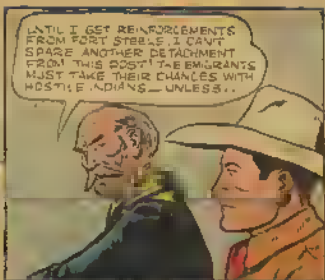
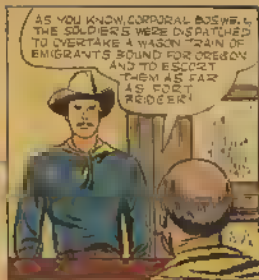
Belain the days of extensive fencing, cattle intermingled freely. Even
today, this is true in many instances. Brands are necessary if ranchers
are to protect their livestock.

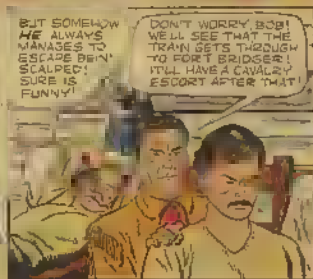
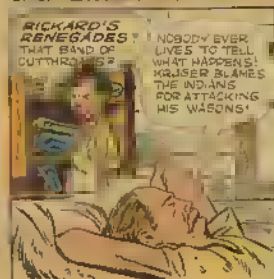
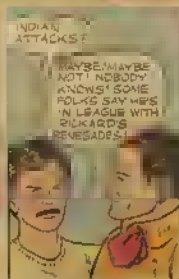
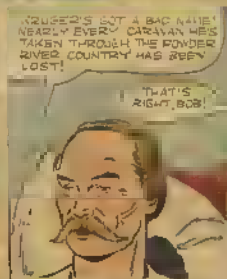
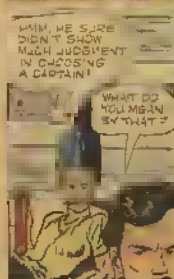
To have any value, brands are registered. In some states, registration
is statewide. In others, as
in Texas, registration is by
county. Once a brand is
accepted for registration,
no other person in that
state may use that brand.











SOME DAYS LATER ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL —
A RIBBON-GRAVEYARD FOR MEN AND EQUIPMENT
WHO DARED TO BRAVE THE HAZARDS OF A NEW
FRONTIER...

WE'VE COME A LONG
WAY WITHOUT SPOTTIN'
AN INDIAN PATROL, A
BOB!

THAT SUITS ME FINE
BUCK! WE SHOULD BE
OVERTAKING THE
COLLINS WAGON TRAIN
SOON!



UH-OH, I SMOKE
TOO SOON!
SMOKE SIGNALS!

OH, NO!
WHERE,
BUCK?



SOULX SMOKE
TALK! SOMETHIN'
ABOUT GREAT
ROAD — THAT'S
THE OREGON
TRAIL!



CMON, I DON'T
LIKE THE LOOKS
OF THIS! WE'RE
IN HOSTILE
TERRITORY!

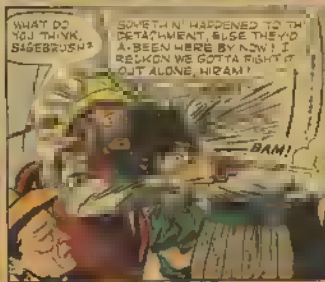
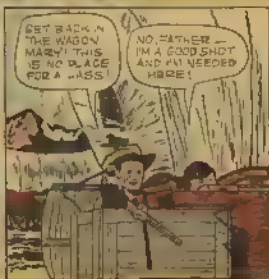
I-I HOPE WE
DON'T RUN INTO
ANY INDIANS
BEFORE WE
REACH THE
CARAVAN!

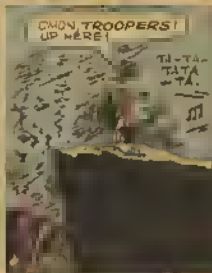
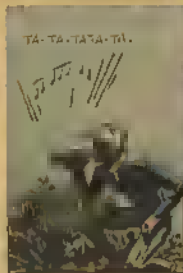
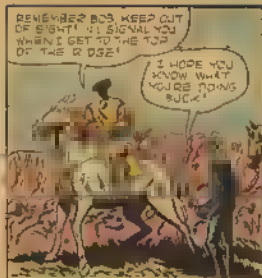


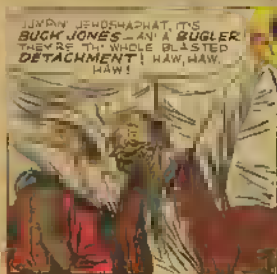
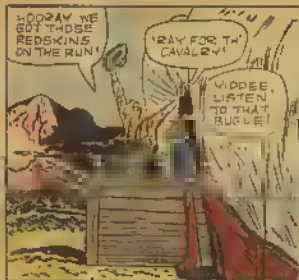
SOUNDS LIKE
TROUBLE UP
AHEAD!

BOOM!
BOOM!
BOOM!





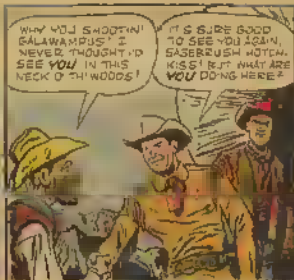






WHAT DO YOU MEAN, **DIFFERENT** ROUTE? I'M CAPTAIN OF THIS TRAIN, JONES! I AM NOT CHANGIN' NO ROUTE WITHOUT A MEETIN' OF TH' COUNCIL!

AFTER I EXPLAIN, I THINK THE COUNCIL WILL SEE IT MY WAY, LUKE!



WHY YOU SHOOTIN' BALAWAMPUS? I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE YOU IN THIS NECK O' TH' WOODS!

IT'S SURE GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, SASERBUSH WOTEN. KISS! BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?



WHY, I'M WAGONMASTER O THIS TRAIN, BUCK! I'M WORKIN' MY WAY TO OREGON!

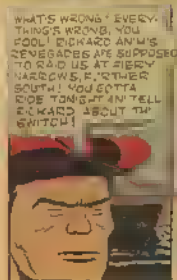
GOOD FOR YOU, SAGE! LET'S GO SOMEPLACE WHERE WE CAN TALK!



THAT NISKY...

TH' DANGED COUNCIL VOTED ME DOWN, SHANK! WE'RE GONNA TAKE JONES' ADVICE AN' CROSS TH' NORTH PLATTE NEAR RED BUTTES!

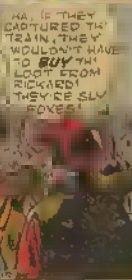
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT, KRUGER?



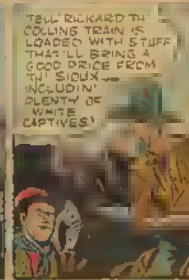
WHAT'S WRONG? EVERY-THING'S WRONG, YOU FOOL! RICKARD AN' M'S REVENGEDES ARE SUPPOSED TO RAID US AT FIERY NARROWS, F'RTHER SOUTH! YOU GOTTA ROB TONIGHT AN' TELL RICKARD ABOUT TH' SWITCH!



HOW COME TH' INJUNS ATTACKED US? RICKARD'S SO FRIENDLY WITH 'EM?



HA, IF THEY CAPTURED TH' TRAIN, THEY WOULDN'T HAVE TO **BUY** TH' LOOT FROM RICKARD! THEY'RE SLV FOXES!



TELL RICKARD TH' COOLING TRAIN IS LOADED WITH STUFF THAT'LL BRING A GOOD PRICE FROM TH' SIOUX - INCLUDIN' PLENTY O' WHITE CAPTIVES!

I GUESS MARY FEELS
PRETTY BAD ABOUT...
ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED
TO MY BROTHER JOHN.
MISTER COLLINS!

SHE'LL GET OVER IT,
SON! SINCE HER MA
DIED, MARY'S LEARNED
THAT FRONTIER LIFE
PLAYS NO FAVORITES!



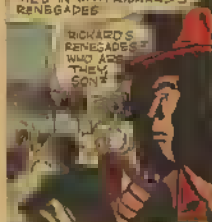
BACK AT THE POST,
THEY SAY YOUR TRAIL
BOSS KRUGER HAS
A BAD REPUTATION!

THEY DO?
IN WHAT
WAY, SON?

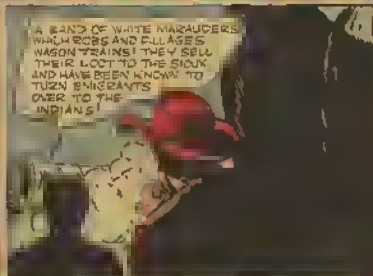


THEY SAY FEW OF HIS WAGON
TRAINS EVER GET THROUGH
— THERE'S TALK HE'S
TIED IN WITH RICKARD'S
RENEGADES

RICKARD'S
RENEGADES?
WHO ARE
THEY,
SON?



A BAND OF WHITE MARAUDERS
WHICH ROBS AND PILLAGES
WAGON TRAINS! THEY SELL
THEIR LOOT TO THE SICK
AND HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO
TURN ENIGMANTS
OVER TO THE
INDIANS!



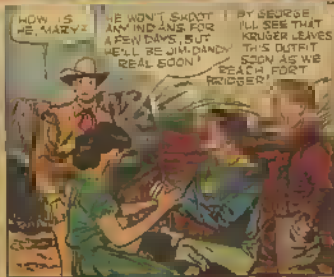
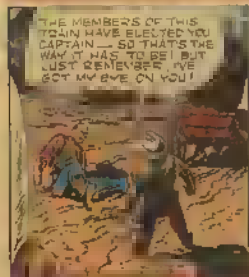
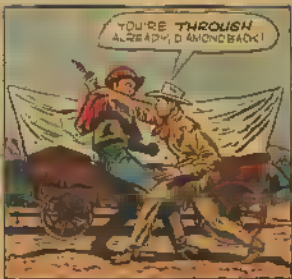
THAT'S A LIE!
YOU AN' THAT
BUCKSKINNED
SCOUT ARE JUST
TROUBLEMAKERS!



HELP! MY
HANDS!

YOU MISERABLE
COWARD! HITTING
A MAN FROM
BEHIND!





THE NEXT MORNING, THE CREAKING WAGON TRAIN
SKIRTS THE BEAR CREEK MOUNTAINS AND
LUMBERS TOWARD RED BUTTES AND THE
NORTH PLATTE.

CANON MOVE!
WODRAW, WODRAW!
MOVE! ABEED 'EM
ROGLIN!

ALL YORE TELLIN' AN
PUSSIN' AIN'T GONNA
MAKE THESE CRITTERS
MOVE A MITE FASTER
KRUGER! THEY'RE
FOOTSCORE!

SHUT UP!
KEEP 'EM
MOVIN' I M
STILL RUNNIN'
THINGS AROUND
HERE!

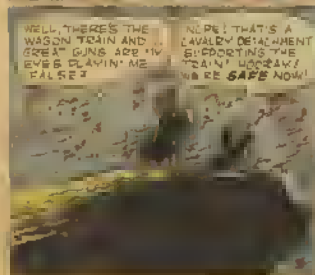
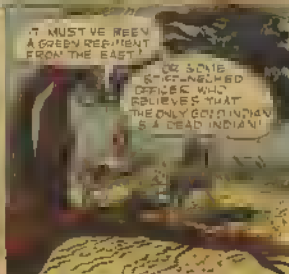
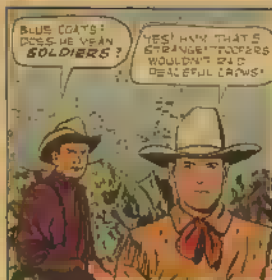
WONDER WHERE
BUCK IS?

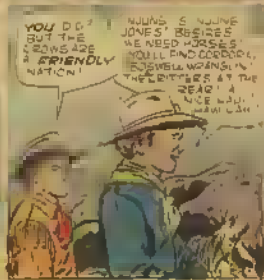
ON HE AND
FATHER WENT
ON AHEAD TO
SCOUT FOR
BUFFALO, BOB!

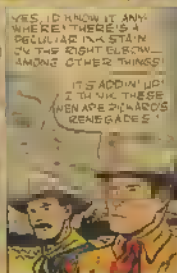
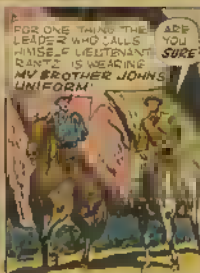
GREAT SHOOTIN', BUCK!
BILL CODY COULDN'T DO
BETTER!

AW NO MORE! S AS DEADLY 'S BUFFALO.
BILL'S FAVORITE GUN, **LUCRETIA BORGIA**.
BUT I'LL STALK SILVER-B AGAINST THE SOLD RMY
BRIGHAM
ANY DAY!









A FEELING OF FOREBODING GRIPS THE WEARY PILGRIMS
AS THEY MAKE CAMP ON THE BANKS OF THE PLATTE.



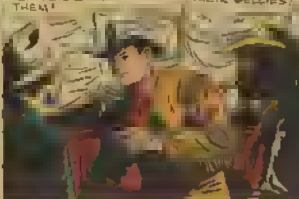
HUMPH! THEY
DON'T EVEN
LET ME LIKE
SO, DIES!

I... I'M FRIGHTENED
IF THEY'RE REALLY
THE WHITE RAIDERS.
THEY MIGHT KILL US
ALL!



I'VE A HUNCH THEY'LL
STRIKE TONIGHT!
THAT'S THE REASON
FOR THEIR MASQUERADE—
TO CATCH US OFF GUARD,
FOR WE DO OUTNUMBER
THEM!

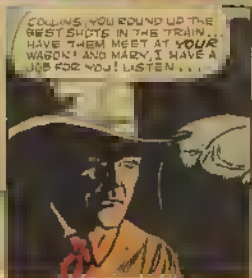
OH, PERHAPS IN
THE SKUNKS
WHILE THEY
EAT THERE
STUFFIN'
THEIR BELLIES!



WHAT'S YOUR
PLAN, BUCK?

LISTEN CLOSELY!
SAGE, YOU SNEAK OFF
AND DRAIN THE WATER
BARRELS ON EVERY
WAGON! WE CAN REFILL
'EM AT THE RIVER
TOMORROW!

COLLINS, YOU ROUND UP THE
BEST SHOTS IN THE TRAIN...
HAVE THEM MEET AT YOUR
WAGON! AND MARY, I HAVE A
JOB FOR YOU! LISTEN...



PRESENTLY

PEST RICHARD HERE COMES
THAT MEDDLIN' SCOUT!
WE'VE GOT TO TAKE CARE OF
HIM FIRST!

YOU'RE RIGHT
FOR ONCE KRUGER!



LIEUTENANT MCGIN TO STAND
GUARD AT SPIRAL ROCK WHERE
I CAN GET A GOOD VIEW OF THE
COUNTRY DE. I'D SUGGEST YOU
DETAIL OTHER GUARDS AROUND
THE CAMP!



A GOOD SUGGESTION
JONES! UN ITS ABOUT
T.L.E WE'LL TURNED IN!
WE GOTTA FORD THAT
RIVER FIRST THING
IN THE MORNING!



WE'LL RAID TH WAGONS
SOON AS TH SETTLERS
ARE ASLEEP! I WANT
'EM ALL TAKEN ALIVE!
THEY WON'T SUSPECT
NOTHING! TILL IT'S TOO
LATE!



HUM, SO THAT'S
WHY YOU BOUGHT
TH UNIFORMS
FROM TH 'SIOUS!

WHAT ABOUT JONES
RICHARD? HE'S
A B.B. & MORE
A WANDFUL!

IT'S YOUR JOB
TO BREAK OUT
TO SPIRAL ROCK
AN TAKE CARE OF
HIM! YOUR SQUAD I'LL
BE THE SIGNAL FOR US TO
STRIKE!



THE REST OF YOU JASPERS
CLIMB INTO YOUR BEDROLLS
OUT NEAR THE REMUDA!
-- WAKE YOU LATER!

AN THEN TH
GUN STARTS
EN RICHARD?
HAW HAW!



LATER

NOW THAT ALL OUR MEN
HAVE THEIR INSTRUCTIONS
WE'LL MOSEY OFF TO SPIRAL
RIDGE LIKE I'M GOIN TO
STAND GUARD—BUT
LL BE BACK!

AND THE HONEYPOCKS
ARE SAFE,
BUCK! GOOD
LUCK!

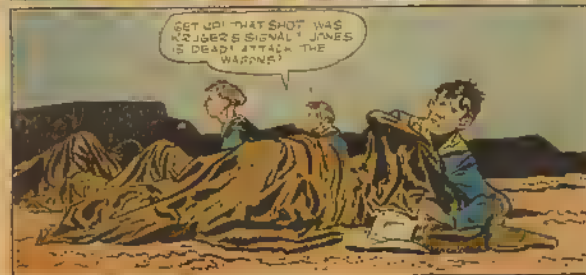
SURE IS QUIET OUT HERE...

TOO QUIET! AND I CAN
SMELL INDIANS! HUH
WHY A NIGHT!

WHERE COMES THAT
DRAITED SCOUT NOW!
WELL, I'M READY FOR 'EM!

WHY I SAW MIDLIGHT
REFLECTIN' ON METAL UP
ON THAT LEDGE! BETTER
SNEAK UP QUIETLY!
SOMEBODY MAY BE WAITIN
THERE FOR ME!

BUT MAYBE IT WAS JUST
MY IMAGINATION!







WHAT'LL WE DO
NOW, BUCK?
THEY'RE GETTING
AWAY — ACROSS
THE RIVER!

YEAH, WHAT'S LEFT
OF 'EM, TH' MANSY
COVOTES!

I'VE A SNEAKIN' HUNCH THEY
WON'T GET VERY FAR! BESIDES,
WE'VE STILL GOT OUR OWN HORSES
STAKED OUT WITH THE WOMENFOLK
UP ON THE KNOLL!

SAY WHAT'S
THAT NOISE?

LOKA-WAI!

HAI! THE HATED
BLUE COATS!

INJUNS!
WHAT TH'—

(INJUNS
BY GOWDY)

FETCH THE WOMEN-
FOLK BACK TO THE
CARAVAN! I'LL GO
HAVE A LOOKSEE!

FIRST TIME I EVER
FELT LIKE CHEERIN'
TH' INJUNS!

WELL, DON'T
DO IT OUT LOUD
— YET!



WE'RE A LUCK,
SAGE! IT'S A
PARTY OF
CROWS!

WUH, CROWS, SIOUX,
PAWNEES, ARAPAHOS
— ALL INJUNS.
AIN'T THEY? AN'
DON'T WANT MY SCALD
DECORATIN' NO
WARRIOR'S TEEPEE!



HELD'S AINT
REALLY A
TROOPER —

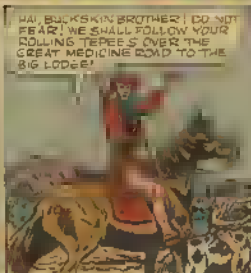
I KNOW IT, PALE-
FACE RENEGADE!
BUT YOU RAID
OUR VILLAGE!



OH, DEAR!
WILL THEY
ATTACK US
NEXT?

DON'T
RECKON
THEY WILL,
MA'AM!

WELL, I AIN'T
BETTIN' ON IT,
BY GRAVY!



HAI, BUCKSKIN BROTHER! DO NOT
FEAR! WE SHALL FOLLOW YOUR
ROLLING TEEPEES OVER THE
GREAT MEDICINE ROAD TO THE
BIG LODGE!



HOORAY! WE MADE
IT — THANKS TO
BUCK JONES AND
OUR CROW ESCORT!

WIDEE —
OREGON
OR BUST!

UHM, A MESSAGE FROM
AN OLD FRIEND, SHERIFF
JUD CONRADY! HE'S
HAVIN' OUTLAW
TROUBLE!

SO LONG, BUCK
JONES — AND
GOOD LUCK!

BUCK JONES

THE
BOX OF
TROUBLE

WELD!

FOUR MORE DAYS
OF RIDIN' SILVER-B
AN' WE'LL BE HOME
... UN. ON WHAT'S
THAT?

GANG O' ROGERS JUMPED
ME... I GOT AWAY...
CRAWLED HERE AFTER
MY HOSS BROKE
HIS LEG!

BUT WHY
DID THEY
SHOOT YOU,
DADNERT?

A MAN,
WOUNDED!

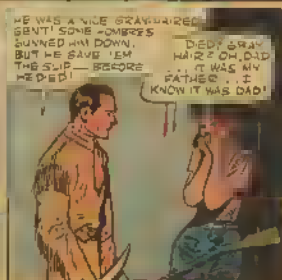
HURRY!
I AINT GONNA
LAST LONG!

THERE'S TEN THOUSAND
DOLLARS W' THIS LITTLE
STRONG BOX... THEY
WANT IT YOU TAKE
IT. I AINT GONNA
LAST...

I'LL GO
GET A DOC!

NO... BUT BOY IN
JAY IN BARN IT
LAYS BUNCH
FREE MILES EAST
O' CASTLE ROCK
SHOOT DAD! DOC
GER AN
JUNKHU...

WHAT ELSE? WHO
ARE YOU? PLEASE
TRY TO TELL ME
A LITTLE MORE!



THE SHERIFF'S POSSE
JUST LEFT! THEY
SEARCHED ALL OVER
THE BARN! THEY
REFUSED TO TELL
ME WHAT HAPPENED!

BUT WHAT
WAS HE
DOIN' WITH
THIS BIZ?



DAD BRIGGS, MY FATHER,
SWORE HE'D GET REVENGE
ON KNOWLES THE BANNER
FOR FORELOSIN ON THE
LAZY B! THEY WERE
BITTER ENEMIES!

STILL
DON'T SAWY!



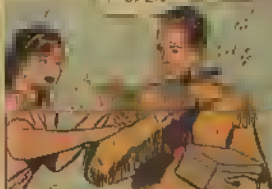
THIS AFTERNOON A
MASKED MAN HELD
UP THE STAGE AND
STOLE THE BANK'S
SHIPMENT OF TEN
THOUSAND DOLLARS!

O- SO THIS IS THE
STOLEN STONG.
SOX! DEARS LIKE
YOUR DAD WANTED
YOU TO HAVE MONEY
TO PAY OFF THE
MORTGAGE!



STOP!
WHAT ARE
YOU TRYING
TO DO?

SHOOT OFF THE LOCK
AN' HAVE A LOOKSEE
INSIDE THE BOX! THE
OLD-TIMER STARTED
TO TELL ME TO BUST
IT OPEN!



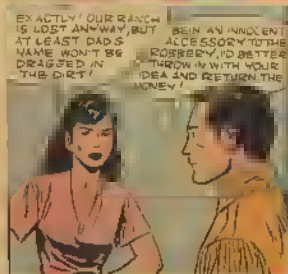
NO DON'T! I MUST RETURN
THE BOX TO THE BANK -
INTACT! I CAN'T HAVE MY
FATHER DIE A CRIMINAL!
HE NEVER STOLE A CENT
IN HIS LIFE BEFORE
TODAY!



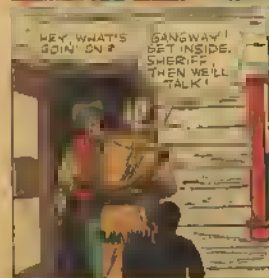
KNOWLES FORCED HIM INTO
THIS CRAZY-FOOL STUNT
BY BEING SO MEAN AND
CONTEMPTIBLE! I'VE JUST
GOT TO RETURN THE BOX
AND CLEAR DAD'S NAME!

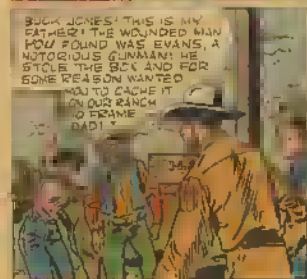
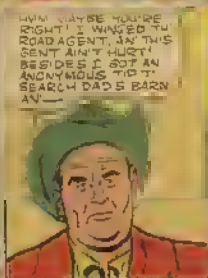
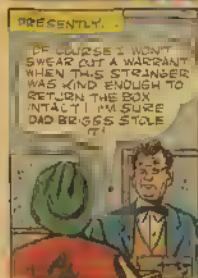
MMM
MAYBE
YOU'RE
RIGHT
MISS!

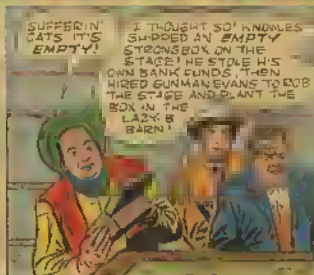
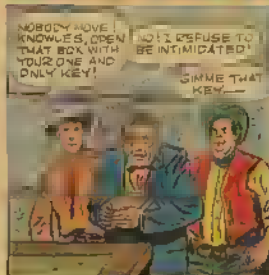
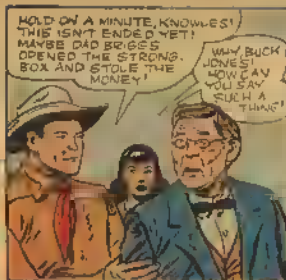




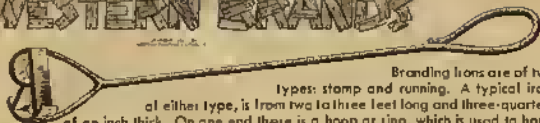




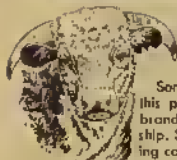




WESTERN BRANDS



Branding irons are of two types: stamp and running. A typical iron, of either type, is from two to three feet long and three-quarters of an inch thick. On one end there is a hoop or ring, which is used to hang up the iron when it is not in use. The stamp iron has a stamp set at the end of the handle at a right angle.



A DOUBLE UNDERBIT



The running iron, however, has no stamp and is curved or "fishhooked" at the end.

Sometimes cattle are earmarked. Although this practice is not used as extensively as branding, it is also a way of showing ownership. Several different methods of earmarking cattle are used. A "crop" is an earmark made by cutting one-half of the animal's ear off smoothly straight from the upper side. A "double averbit" is made by cutting two triangular pieces from the upper part of an animal's ear. A "double underbit" is the reverse of the procedure. Two triangular bits are cut from the under part of an animal's ear. Sometimes an animal is both earmarked and branded.



A CROPPED EAR

Some of the most famous brands in the country are interesting because of the imagination shown in their creation. The famous 6666 was born when a man named S. Burk Burnett won a fortune in cattle and land with a poker hand of four 6's. Saltlarks from Iowa recalled their home by using the brand IOA, while Ohioans chose OIO. A former citizen of Essex, England selected SX for his brand.

Whatever the brand used, the humor, courage, and love of life inherent in the people who settled the West was always reflected.



